

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 EB-07 SCCT-01 SY-05

H-02 L-03 SCA-01 SCS-03 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01

/092 W

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O P 121530Z AUG 76

FM AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7823

INFO RUQMGU/AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE 9298

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS CGEN, CASC, PINS, OREP, ASEC

SUBJECT DISCUSSIONS WITH POLICE AND PUBLIC PROSECUTOR

CONCERNING INVESTIGATION OF TERRORIST ATTACK AT

YESILKOY AIRPORT

REF ISTANBUL 3109

1. ON JULY 12, RSO (WITH ASSISTANCE OF FSL INTERPRETER) VISITED
ISTANBUL POLICE FIRST SECTION (POLITICAL) TO DETERMINE
FACTS BEHIND TERRORIST ATTACK AT YESILKOY AIRPORT ON
AUGUST 11, 1976. FIRST SECTION CHIEF,VURAL YENER, INFORMED RSO
THAT PUBLIC PROSECUTOR WAS AT FIRST SECTION AND THE INVESTIGATION
CONCERNING THE TERRORIST ATTACK HAD BEGUN. PUBLIC PROSECUTOR
NEJAT (LAST NAME UNKNOWN) AND MR. YENER IMMEDIATELY
ASKED THAT THEIR SYMPATHIES BE PASSED TO AMERICAN CONSUL GENERAL
CONCERNING THE DEATH OF AMCIT HAROLD ROSENTHAL. PUBLIC PROSECUTOR
STATED THAT INFORMATION HE WAS ABOUT TO GIVE RSO WAS
PRELIMINARY AND COULD BE MODIFIED AT LATER DATE WHEN INVES-
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TIGATION HAS PROGRESSED FURTHER. HE INDICATED THERE WERE ONLY

TWO INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN TERRORIST ATTACK AND THEY WERE PRESENTLY IN CUSTODY OF THE ISTANBUL POLICE. PUBLIC PROSECUTOR STATED THAT TWO INDIVIDUALS WERE MEMBERS OF THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ARMY (SIC) AND SPECIFICALLY THE HABBASH LIBERATION ARMY (SIC). THE TWO INDIVIDUALS HAD LEFT FROM TRIPOLI AND GONE TO ROME WHERE THEY CAME TO ISTANBUL

2. PUBLIC PROSECUTOR STATED THAT THEIR INVESTIGATION SO FAR REVEALED ATTACK WAS INTENDED AS RETALIATION AGAINST ISRAELIS RESCUE OF AIR FRANCE HOSTAGES AT ENTEBBE UGANDA. HE SAID HE HAD NO INFORMATION THAT THERE WAS HIJACK ATTEMPT. THE RAID WAS DESIGNED TO KILL AS MANY ISRAELIS AS POSSIBLE AND ROSENTHAL WAS A VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCES. THE MANIFEST FOR THE ELA L FLIGHT WAS APPROXIMATELY 95 PERCENT ISRAELI AND THE PUBLIC PROSECUTOR DID NOT BELIEVE THE TERRORISTS WERE CONCERNED WITH THE REMAINING PASSENGERS. AT PRESENT TIME THERE ARE FOUR KNOWN DEAD: TWO ISRAELIS, ONE JAPANESE (WHO CONTRARY TO PUBLIC PRESS REPORTS WAS NOT ASSOCIATED WITH TERRORISTS), ONE AMERICAN (ROSENTHAL) .

3. PUBLIC PROSECUTOR INDICATED THAT TWO 9 MM AUTOMATIC WEAPONS HAD BEEN CONFISCATED AND THEY WERE 99 PERCENT CERTAIN THAT THEY ARE POLISH MADE, BUT THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY THAT THEY COULD BE OF HUNGARIAN ORIGIN. ALL IDENTIFICATION MARKS HAD BEEN RUBBED OFF AND THIS MADE POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION DIFFICULT. PUBLIC PROSECUTOR SAID THAT THREE BOMBS HAD EXPLODED AT THE AIRPORT AND ONE OTHER HAD BEEN RECOVERED BY POLICE. HAND GRENADE RECOVERED WAS RUSSIAN MADE AND WAS ANTI-PERSONNEL DEVICE (CONTAINING NUMEROUS SMALL METAL PELLETS).

4. PUBLIC PROSECUTOR WAS ADVISED BY THE RSO THAT DPO OGDEN AND TURKISH EMPLOYEE OF CONSULATE HAD GONE TO MORGUE TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR RELEASE OF ROSENTHAL'S BODY. PUBLIC PROSECUTOR INDICATED THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE UNTIL THE AUTOPSY WAS COMPLETED BUT IF THE CONSULATE APPLIED IN WRITING THEY WOULD FURNISH A COPY OF THE WRITTEN AUTOPSY REPORT, EVEN THOUGH THIS WAS CONTRARY TO TURKISH LAW WHICH REQUIRES AUTOPSY REPORT BE KEPT SECRET UNTIL CONCLUSION OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INVESTIGATION, SINCE AN AMERICAN OFFICIAL WAS INVOLVED. PRIOR TO CONCLUDING THE INTERVIEW RSO REQUESTED THAT ALL OF ROSENTHAL'S EFFECTS PRESENTLY HELD BY THE POLICE BE RETURNED UPON CONCLUSION OF THE INVESTIGATION. PUBLIC PROSECUTOR INDICATED THAT THIS WOULD BE DONE BATJER

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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